

32c

anm

21

THE

K CHILDREN'S MISCELLANY.

Bid him, besides, his daily pains employ,
To form the tender manners of the boy ;
And work him, like a waxen babe, with art,
To perfect symmetry in every part,

DRYDEN.

Ornamented with a FRONTISPIECE.

L O N D O N :

PRINTED FOR JOHN STOCKDALE,
Opposite Burlington House, Piccadilly.

vii, 335 pp

MDCCLXXXVIII.

20

Description of the Two-Horned Rhinoceros.

THIS animal is found in Africa, chiefly about the Cape of Good Hope, and is distinguished from the common or one-horned Rhinoceros, as well as from all other beasts, by having two horns upon its nose, the larger of which stands foremost towards the muzzle or snout of the animal, the shorter behind it; and higher up towards the forehead. The foremost horn grows almost to the length of two feet, and seven or eight inches thick at the bottom; the hindmost sometimes measures so long as sixteen inches, and proportionably thick. They are of a conical shape, with the tips inclined somewhat backwards, but their size does not always appear to be in proportion to the body. This species of Rhinoceros is endued with prodigious strength,

strength, and, though little inferior in size to the Elephant, and somewhat resembling it in its enormous unwieldy make, runs with astonishing swiftness. It harbours amongst close thickets and bushy copses, from whence it comes forth, in the cool of the evening, to graze for the night. Its food consists of plants and roots, with the tops of shrubs, and small branches of trees. The roots it is supposed to dig up with the smaller of its horns, as this, especially in the older animals, is most commonly observed to be worn away in different parts, which is never the case in the foremost and larger one. It is natural to suppose that this latter is the offensive weapon of the animal, and is therefore never used in the servile employment of digging for its food, at which time it is turned on one side, out of the way; for these horns are said to be so loose and moveable, that when the Rhinoceros walks carelessly along, one may see its horns dangle about, and hear them clash and clatter against each other. The shrubs and plants, which also

compose part of its food, it clips off with its lips, not having any fore teeth for that purpose. Indeed it has little room for them, as the mouth goes off so sharp at the fore-part (something like that of a Tortoise) that it is only an inch and a half broad. Besides, it has no occasion for any teeth there, the skin which forms the lips being of that extreme hardness, that it can perform the office of teeth very well, and that with so much the greater ease, as the under jaw goes within the upper.

The tongue is perfectly soft, which directly contradicts the common notion that the Rhinoceros kills by licking with his tongue. Notwithstanding the formidable bulk and amazing strength of this animal, which has been known to run up to a waggon and carry it to a considerable distance upon its shout and horns, the Hottentots and the Dutch farmers who live in the inland parts round the Cape of Good Hope, frequently attack and overpower it. For the purpose of shooting it they use balls made of lead and

and tin mixt, and having found out its retirement they approach it on the side opposite to that from which the wind blows. This precaution is absolutely necessary on account of the very acute smell and hearing with which the animal is endued. At the least noise more than usual, it takes the alarm, and erecting its ears, stands clapping with them and listening; and if the hunter be so imprudent as to get to the windward of it, even at a great distance, it seldom fails directly to follow him by the scent, and attack him with the greatest fury. Being therefore pretty secure on the side of the wind, the Rhinoceros has the sagacity, in general to chuse, by way of entrenchment, a bush very thick and high on that side from whence it has no scent. If wounded it rushes out from the thickets into the plain, when the boldest sportsmen prudently consult their safety by flight. It soon, however, turns aside, and if there be no copse convenient for its escape, makes off straight forward over the plain. If they happen to have

hounds out with them, these pursue it, and form a strong contrast to the colossal size of the animal, which, however, seems not to take the least notice of them. With a gentle rise and fall of the neck it keeps on an even and steady course, a kind of pacing, which nevertheless gets over a great deal of ground: but this pace, on hearing a few shots fired after it, it alters to a very fast gallop, so as in an instant to leave the hounds at a great distance behind; and, in all probability, any sportsman would inevitably be lost; who should happen to become the object of its pursuit, if he had not art enough to get out of the sight and scent of it by shifting and dodging occasionally. In this particular the Rhinoceros is said to resemble the Elephant, that without delaying or stopping in the least, it will run to the distance of many leagues from the place where it has been closely hunted, or in any other way molested.

The Two-horned Rhinoceros sleeps in a different posture from the Elephant: it lies
down

TWO-HORNED RHINOCEROS. 157

down on the ground on one side, and withal is said to sleep so sound that the Hottentots and Dutch colonists frequently steal upon it while in that situation, and shoot it ; it differs very much in this respect from the common or one-horned Rhinoceros, which is described as by no means a sleepy animal. If it happens not to die immediately of its wounds, the Hottentot hunters will nevertheless follow the traces of it for one or more days, till it drops down with weakness and fatigue. In general, however, they poison one or two of their darts before they attack it, in which case they have no occasion to wait so many days as they otherwise would before their prey falls into their hands.

Fortunately for those who attack the Rhinoceros, with all its keenness of smell and hearing, it labours under the disadvantage of being extremely nearsighted. In effect, its eyes are very small and sunk in its head, which is perhaps the reason why it sees but indistinctly, and that only straight forward, so as not even to perceive a horseman

man at the distance of fifty or sixty yards upon the open plain, unless directed by its scent or hearing to fix upon the object. Whenever therefore it happens to receive a wound without being able to discover from what hand it proceeds, this circumstance seems to provoke it to a greater degree of fury. Not knowing where to wreak its vengeance, it swings the fore part of its body violently from one side to the other, and snuffs up with its nostrils as if endeavouring to discover the enemy by its smell. The noise which it makes with its nose upon such occasions is particularly terrible to the horses of those who are in chace of it, for when wounded it will snuff and blow so hard and so loud as to startle them, and make them uneasy, at the distance of some hundreds of yards. Indeed, instinct sufficiently informs the horse of its danger, when the Rhinoceros is nigh, not only by the hearing but by the smell also; for whenever the sportsmen approach its retreat, which is always done against the wind, the horses having the advantage

TWO-HORNED RHINOCEROS. 159

vantage of the breeze, are enabled to discover their tremendous enemy so far off as forty or fifty yards by the smell. Upon this they immediately stop, and give evident proofs of terror by their unwillingness to proceed any farther.

This animal is of a greyish or ash colour, but, which is very remarkable, seems to change its hue; and become almost black upon being hard hunted. This is owing probably to the dust and dried mud that sticks to its skin (as it is very fond of rolling and wallowing in the mire), and when moistened by sweat, becomes much darker in colour. About the groin, however, where the skin is not so thick as on the rest of the body, and almost quite smooth, it is nearly of the colour of a man's flesh. On all other parts the surface of the skin is rough and knotty, and not much differing from that of an Elephant, but of a closer texture, and when it is dry extremely hard. It has not, however, any of those plaits and folds which are to be observed in the common

mon descriptions and figures published of it, and which give it the appearance of being covered with a harness. The hide is an inch and a half thick on the back, and somewhat thicker on the sides, though less compact there. It is, however, by no means impenetrable, as has been commonly supposed. Leaden balls indeed will sooner be flattened against the skin than pierce it; but when they are hardened by a proper mixture of tin, the Rhinoceros may be killed with a single shot. Nay, its hide, as well as that of the Elephant, is capable of being penetrated by javelins and darts. A Hottentot, at the distance of five or six paces, has been known to pierce through the hide of a Rhinoceros half a foot deep into its body. Some have also imagined it to possess no feeling in its skin; but, besides what is mentioned of the common Rhinoceros, that it is capable of being tickled under the belly with a wisp of straw, the Two-horned Rhinoceros is fond (as was mentioned before) of wallowing in the mire like a hog,

TWO-HORNED RHINOCEROS. 161

a hog, which would hardly be the case were its hide absolutely insensible ; and indeed, when the thick hide of an Elephant is affected by the stinging of flies, we cannot suppose that of the Rhinoceros to be totally destitute of feeling. Its skin, though tough and close in its texture, has, particularly about the groin, vessels, blood, and juices, adapted for the nourishment of insects ; and in effect this animal is found to be infested in that part with a particular species of insect ; neither does the thickness of its hide hinder it from perspiring. Lastly, the Rhinoceros here described may be said to be totally destitute of hair, though there are a few scattered dark bristly hairs, about an inch long, on the edges of the ears, with a very few between and round about the horns, and at the tip of the tail. This part of the animal is about an inch thick, diminishing by degrees from the root to the tip, where it is flattened at the sides ; and on the edges, produced by this flatness, are to be seen some strong stiff hairs, an inch or
an

an inch and a half in length. Such of them as stand towards the creature's hard and rough body are visibly worn down and stunted.

Of the inward parts of this animal, it is sufficient to observe, that its flesh, when dressed, tastes a good deal like pork, but much coarser. Its brains are less than those of a middle-sized man; like the horse, it has no gall; its entrails also most resemble those of a horse: so that this beast, notwithstanding its being furnished with horns, does by no means belong to the class of those which chew the cud, but rather of those whose fat is of a soft nature like lard, and not hard like tallow. The stomach however does not bear the least resemblance to that of a horse, but rather to that of a man or a hog; and the contents of it, when opened, after the animal has been lately killed, are usually without smell, and perfectly fresh and sweet, consisting of roots and small branches of trees chewed, some of them as big as the end of a man's finger; and of succulent plants,

plants, the whole diffusing around a very strong and not disagreeable aromatic odour.

The Three Brothers.

EUGENE, Richard, and Cassander, were the sons of Mr. Smithson, a reputable merchant in the North of England, who, having no other children besides them, and being in pretty affluent circumstances, resolved to have them educated immediately under his own eye. For this purpose he invited into his house a Mr. Markham, a gentleman of learning and approved morals, to be their tutor, whose care and attention to their improvement afterwards fully answered all his expectations.

These Three Brothers, from their earliest infancy, were play-mates and companions.

They